

**Statement of
Representative Julia Brownley
Subcommittee on Space**

“NASA Infrastructure: Enabling Discovery and Ensuring Capability”

September 20, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today’s hearing to review NASA’s infrastructure and facilities, and welcome to our witnesses.

Ranking Member Edwards has another commitment and has asked me to sit in the chair. I request that her prepared statement be entered into the record.

Ranking Member Edwards and I share the same passion for ensuring that NASA has a productive and inspiring future. However, a strong and vibrant space program requires that we provide NASA with adequate resources, including the R&D tools and facilities it needs to accomplish its challenging missions and cutting-edge research.

I am concerned about the state of the agency’s facilities and infrastructure. The fact that NASA’s facilities are aging should come as no surprise. Many were built during and before the Apollo era. Today, challenged by both declining funding and an uncertain budgetary environment, NASA is trying to make do with what it is given.

In that regard, I am especially concerned about adequately funding NASA’s Environmental Compliance and Restoration program, which is responsible for cleaning up hazardous materials and waste that have been released to the surface or groundwater at NASA installations, NASA-owned industrial plants supporting NASA activities, current or former sites where NASA operations have contributed to environmental problems, and other sites where the Agency is legally obligated to address hazardous pollutants.

According to NASA’s FY 2014 budget request, one of the projects planned includes investigation and cleanup of contaminated groundwater, soils, and demolition at Santa Susana Field Laboratory in accordance with the consent order with the State of California.

This and other planned environmental compliance and restoration activities have been the result of painstaking negotiations between NASA and several states.

That is why I hope to learn more about the status of NASA’s actions at Santa Susana and about what is needed to address NASA’s other long-standing facilities and infrastructure challenges.

NASA’s successes are a shining light of inspiration and accomplishment for our youth and our nation, and I want to ensure that we enable NASA to continue to fill that role in the coming years.